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NASA TELECONFERENCE

Speakers:

BILL GERSTENMAIER, Associate Administrator,
Space Operations

WAYNE HALE, Manager, Space Shuttle Program

JOHN HONEYCUTT, Deputy Manager,
External Tank Project

[Moderated by Allard Beutel, NASA Public Affairs]

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MODERATOR: Do we have Mr. Hale on at Marshall?

3 MR. HALE: Yes. Yes, I am with you.

4 MODERATOR: Very good. I think we do have Mr.
5 Honeycutt at Kennedy.

6 MR. HONEYCUTT: Yes, I am here.

7 MODERATOR: Okay. I guess that means we are
8 ready to start.

9 I apologize for the delay, everyone. Just before
10 we start, again, I want to let everybody know that all
11 phone lines are up and hot. So, to avoid any background
12 noise, please dial star-6 on your phone. That mutes it.
13 If I call on you for a question, you hit star-6 again, and
14 that unmutes your phone, and you can ask your question, but
15 the idea is to get as clean a feed as possible. So please
16 star-6 your phone, so we don't get any background noise,
17 please, and that would be wonderful.

18 Again, sorry for the delay. This is an update on
19 the launch status of Space Shuttle Atlantis' STS-117
20 mission to the International Space Station. This follows a
21 meeting on the latest status on the external tank repairs
22 from the hail damage that took place in late February.

1 We have all of our briefers actually spread out
2 across the country. That is the reason we are having a
3 teleconference instead of a news conference. So what we
4 will do is let you know where everybody is.

5 With me here in Washington is Bill Gerstenmaier,
6 the Associate Administrator for Space Operations.

7 At NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in
8 Huntsville, Alabama, we have Wayne Hale, the Space Shuttle
9 Program manager, and at Kennedy Space Center, we have John
10 Honeycutt, the Deputy Manager for the External Tank
11 Project.

12 We will open up with the status of the meeting
13 that just took place and the latest information and the
14 decision that came out of it, and then we will open it up
15 to questions.

16 Again, star-6 your phone for our briefing. After
17 the update, we will open it up for questions.

18 Mr. Gerstenmaier?

19 MR. GERSTENMAIER: Again, today, Wayne and his
20 team had kind of a review of the work that is going on with
21 External Tank 124, the tank that took the hail damage back
22 in February. We listened in at Headquarters. We had the

1 full team here. Mike Griffin was present, Brian O'Connor,
2 and Chris Scolese. All the folks at Headquarters that were
3 interested listened in, and we kind of reviewed the overall
4 status of where we are heading with this tank.

5 Again, I think Wayne will give you the details,
6 but basically, we agree with the decision that the program
7 is heading on to continue with this external tank, to use
8 this tank, and talk to you about more of the details, and
9 Wayne can fill you in on that.

10 We also talked a little bit about where we are
11 heading from kind of a launch processing standpoint, and it
12 looks like when the beta angle opens in June, around June
13 8th would be the first no-earlier-than date for the launch
14 period based on the amount of work we have got in front of
15 us.

16 We had a very good discussion, a very good
17 review. We don't see any big showstoppers in front of us,
18 but we understand there is still quite a bit of work to do
19 on the tank as well as some amount of testing and analysis
20 that needs to be done, but we didn't see anything that
21 really changed us from the path that we are on. Again, I
22 think the program has done a very good job of doing the

1 physical work and also doing the analysis and keeping the
2 options in front.

3 So those are my opening remarks.

4 MODERATOR: Okay. Mr. Hale?

5 MR. HALE: Thank you, Allard.

6 Yes. We did review today the engineering work
7 that has gone forward on the new and, I would say, unusual
8 and kind of specialized repair area up near the front of
9 the tank that we are very interested in making sure is a
10 good repair.

11 We have done quite a bit of work at the Michoud
12 Assembly Facility with their production and engineering
13 staff. There are a number of engineering tests that are in
14 progress. There was what we call a "Technical Interchange
15 Meeting," or a TIM, yesterday to review that progress. All
16 parties agreed that that particular repair technique is on
17 track to be used as a repair, although we still do have
18 some testing outstanding on it.

19 In the meanwhile, at the Kennedy Space Center,
20 the work force is proceeding with a large number of repairs
21 that are what we call "standard repairs" in areas that have
22 been evaluated by the engineering team. They have about

1 700 of those repairs. They are about halfway through that
2 effort today.

3 If we continue with the pace of repair that we
4 are doing, we should be looking at an orbiter roll-out or a
5 vehicle roll-out to the launch pad perhaps as early as May
6 6th and a launch that would come after the beta window
7 cutout expires, no earlier than June the 8th, but what we
8 are doing, of course, is letting the work drive the
9 schedule rather than the other way around.

10 Our people are proceeding with a great deal of
11 caution, and there is a great deal of engineering rigor
12 that is going into this process.

13 We do have the next tank, ET-117, already
14 delivered to the Kennedy Space Center. So it is available
15 and would be available for us to use. We are going to
16 continue to monitor everything, but as of right now, we are
17 going to stay with the tank, ET-124, that is on the stack
18 today.

19 The entire team unanimously agreed that progress
20 was being made adequately to do that. Of course, we could
21 get surprised and change our opinion, but right now, we are
22 going to stay with that tank, and as I said, that leads us

1 to a launch date about the second week in June and no
2 earlier than.

3 The launch window extends from June the 8th
4 through July 18th, when we encounter another solar beta
5 cutout of a couple weeks to August 5th. We would like to
6 get the following flight off sometime as early as we could
7 in August, and we will be assessing that launch date as
8 well.

9 So that is the status today, and I will let John
10 Honeycutt add anything from the Kennedy Space Center.

11 MR. HONEYCUTT: Thanks, Wayne.

12 The team has really done a great job and
13 continues to execute the plans that we have got to repair
14 124, as you said. We have got about 700 PDL repairs. We
15 have got about half of them done.

16 I guess something that is not new to us, but new
17 to the folks we are talking to today is we have picked up
18 an additional BX spray in the lower part of the liquid
19 oxygen tank. Once we work through those spray
20 demonstrations at the Michoud Assembly Facility to support
21 those activities -- and we've also done a significant
22 amount of aerothermal testing and icing test to support

1 these repairs at the Marshall Space Flight Center. Again,
2 our goal is to keep as much good NCFI on the tank as
3 possible and provide a tank that is safe to fly.

4 MODERATOR: Okay. Thank you.

5 Now that we have had a brief update, we are going
6 to go through the list of reporters we have. We have a
7 pretty high number on. We will go through the order that
8 you RSVP'd. I will call on you. Please star-6 your phone
9 now, and then dial star-6 when I call on you, and you can
10 ask your question.

11 We will start off, please, with just one
12 question, and if time allows, we will come back for more,
13 but I just want to make sure everybody at least gets a
14 chance to get one question.

15 So let's start off with Tom Costello, NBC Nightly
16 News.

17 [No response.]

18 MODERATOR: Tom Costello, are you on?

19 [No response.]

20 MODERATOR: Okay. How about Bill Harwood, CBS?

21 QUESTIONER: Yes, I am here. Can you hear me?

22 MODERATOR: Yes, sir.

1 QUESTIONER: Hey, Wayne and Gerst, I realize that
2 this is all contingent on completing the repairs and your
3 analysis that you can launch on the 8th and maybe in early
4 August, and I know, Wayne, there was a change request done,
5 I guess, for STS-120 and 22 out there. Can you give us any
6 sense of where you stand with the possibility of getting
7 four flights off this year? Can you get Columbus off in
8 December, if this schedule does, in fact, play out the way,
9 I guess, everybody is hoping it will?

10 Thanks.

11 MR. HALE: Well, let me take a crack at that.

12 We sent out the potential manifest for review to
13 all the parts of the Space Shuttle program. We are going
14 to come back Monday afternoon, April 16th, and review what
15 people think of that, but I will tell you, it depends
16 entirely on when we get done with these ET repairs and when
17 we launch the STS-117. I mean, that is the first part of
18 flying the rest of the flights this year.

19 I would tell you that flying four flights is not
20 outside the realm of possibility, but, you know, we want to
21 do this in a safe and orderly manner, and we will just see
22 how it works out.

1 MODERATOR: Okay. Peter King, CBS News?

2 QUESTIONER: Thanks, Allard. Good evening,
3 everyone.

4 I don't know if Wayne or Mr. Honeycutt are the
5 best to explain this, but tell us how you are going to
6 repair -- in the best layman's terms, how you are going to
7 repair all those dings in the ET with reasonable assurance
8 that you won't shed significant foam on the way uphill.

9 MR. HALE: John, I am going to hand that one to
10 you.

11 MR. HONEYCUTT: Okay. Peter, we have got test
12 plans laid out that support the answers to your question.

13 A lot of the areas, we are doing our PDL repairs.
14 We are doing testing for our PDL repairs and NCFI in the
15 hot gas facilities and aerothermal test facility.

16 We are also doing those same type of aerothermal
17 tests on truss foam, foam that is not damaged very much at
18 all, that is barely visible.

19 We are also doing the same type of tests on our
20 sand and wind repairs, which are areas that we blend out
21 the foam in the damage site and maintain our minimum
22 thickness.

1 So the tests that we are doing in the aerothermal
2 test facility as well as any icing tests that we are doing
3 in our environmental chamber assure us that we are not
4 going to create any debris as we fly.

5 MR. HALE: It is also important to recognize that
6 on a typical tank, we fly a number of these PDL pour-foam
7 repairs on the tank. So, even though this is a larger
8 number than we typically fly, we have flown this number
9 before, and we can use that as part of our rationale. It
10 doesn't stand as the sole rationale. We will do this
11 additional testing that John talked about, but it shows
12 that we have flown this type of repair before, and it is
13 not totally outside of our experience base.

14 We also flew STS-96, ET-100, that also had hail
15 damage. It had maybe 200 repairs, not quite as many as we
16 had here, and it also did every well, and the teams have
17 reviewed the data there. It showed that this repair
18 technique is pretty viable from an overall assurance that
19 the tank will not shed foam.

20 MODERATOR: Okay. Gina Sunseri, ABC?

21 QUESTIONER: Asked and answered. Thank you.

22 MODERATOR: Very good. Mark Kirkman, Interspace

1 News.

2 QUESTIONER: Yes. Allard, can you hear me?

3 MODERATOR: Yes, sir.

4 QUESTIONER: This is probably for Wayne or Bill.

5 You mentioned you wanted to roll out around the
6 6th. I was just wondering. Is that completely driven by
7 the ET repair issue, or does the engine replacement come
8 into play there? I guess you will do the requisite stuff,
9 and you also may have a small amount of repairs. Does that
10 affect the date?

11 Thank you.

12 MR. HALE: Mark, right now, we believe that all
13 of the requisite engine work will be completed under the
14 umbrella of the external tank repairs, and that we will be
15 rolling out based on when those repairs are done.

16 MODERATOR: Okay. Mark Carreau, Houston
17 Chronicle?

18 QUESTIONER: Thanks. Mark Carreau, Houston
19 Chronicle.

20 Can you tell us kind of what you are thinking at
21 this point as far as Sunita Williams return on 117 or 118,
22 and when 118 -- I think you said it's still sort of soft,

1 but it would be August the 5th or thereabouts, the soonest
2 they could launch that mission.

3 MR. GERSTENMAIER: I think the current planning
4 is we will leave the return scenario the way we have it
5 currently planned on the books for STS-118, sometime in
6 August. We will still continue to evaluate that, and we
7 are looking at options that if things shift around or we
8 run into trouble, we could go ahead and potentially change
9 the order and bring her home on an earlier flight.

10 So, again, we are starting to do those analyses.
11 We will protect. Like always, we kind of plan for the
12 worst and hope for the best, but right now, we are staying
13 with the current scenario of STS-118 for the crew rotation,
14 but we will be prepared if things move around a little bit
15 later to recover and do that on an earlier flight or at
16 least understand what the impacts are.

17 MODERATOR: Okay. Craig Covault, Av Week?

18 QUESTIONER: Hi. Thanks. Good evening.

19 A couple of trade-off questions. You might
20 summarize just what pushed you behind May, the fundamental
21 thing, obviously the workload and the verifications, and
22 then what you actually buy time-wise, given that to fly the

1 repair tank, what would have happened if you would have
2 opted for the new tank in terms of schedule?

3 MR. HALE: Well, let's see. I think the repairs,
4 as they are tracking today, we are leading to a roll-out
5 about the 5th or 6th of May, and again, that is going to
6 depend on how we do with the repairs, but assuming we get
7 out then, we could not launch within the May window which
8 closes on May 21st. So that pushes us into the June 8th
9 window, the start of the opening of the window.

10 Let's see. The study effort that the Kennedy
11 manifesting folks did for us showed that if we were to
12 decide today to switch to the ET No. 117, the new tank,
13 just delivered, we could launch no earlier than June 19th.

14 They are becoming close in terms of schedule, but
15 the consideration is, of course, we would like to avoid
16 taking the orbiter back to the orbiter processing facility
17 and all of that effort that is involved in switching tanks.

18 So, as long as we are on a good path to repair the hail
19 damaged tank, we should stay with it.

20 MODERATOR: Okay. Tariq Malik, Space.com?

21 QUESTIONER: Great. Thank you. Can you hear me?

22 This is Tariq Malik, Space.com and SpaceNews.

1 MODERATOR: Yes, sir.

2 QUESTIONER: Great. I have a question I think
3 for John, just to kind of get an accurate count of how many
4 repairs you are fixing, with what method that you are
5 employing. I think you mentioned 700 here for the PDL, but
6 can you kind of break that down for me, just how many did
7 you have to sand and blend, I guess, to date, and then what
8 lies ahead there?

9 MR. HALE: Okay, Tariq. Thanks.

10 Overall, right now we've got 2,664 damages to
11 repair. We haven't started any sand-and-blends yet. We
12 have gotten approximately 700 PDL repairs to make. We have
13 done about 350 of those, and the remainder of that 2,600,
14 after you take out the PDL repairs includes the repairs
15 that we picked up in that additional BX spray that I
16 mentioned in the opening comments, and then the remainder
17 of that are sand-and-blends and use as-is.

18 QUESTIONER: Thank you.

19 MODERATOR: Okay. Irene Klotz, Reuters?

20 QUESTIONER: Thanks very much.

21 Bill Gerstenmaier, you addressed this a little
22 bit, but I was wondering if you could just elaborate a bit

1 on what are the issues for keeping Suni Williams up longer
2 than 6, 7, or perhaps even into 8 months?

3 I know there used to be kind of a hard-and-fast
4 time when you wanted the crew members to come back, and I
5 am wondering if that has been extended at all, or is it
6 ambiguous at this point?

7 MR. GERSTENMAIER: It's always been kind of a
8 soft number. We target around 180 days or so.

9 Suni's original expedition was over that 180
10 days, and so then we don't see any hard points or any
11 restrictions of when we have to bring her home from any
12 standpoints. Everything is fine overall. There is no big,
13 you know, this date is okay, this date is not okay, but it
14 becomes more of a planning scenario that if we start seeing
15 the Shuttle flights moving to the right, again, we wouldn't
16 want to go another increment from beyond August to
17 September or November or whenever it ends up in the fall.
18 Then to prepare for that, we would go ahead and try to
19 bring her home on the earlier flight on STS-117.

20 So there is nothing really magic about being a
21 particular date or not. We are just kind of watching them
22 overall and see where they are, and we will look ahead,

1 kind of prepare for one failure ahead, if we delayed
2 another Shuttle flight, what would it mean to her overall
3 duration, and at that point, we would try to execute the
4 earlier flight.

5 But right now, we are just investigating to see
6 what the options are, what is available, to see what works
7 from a manifest and non-orbit planning standpoint.

8 MODERATOR: Okay. I just want to remind
9 everybody that all microphones are live and hot right now.

10 We are getting some background noise. So, again, if you
11 mute your phone until I call on you, you need to do it with
12 your regular mute or star-6 on your phone to mute it, and I
13 will wait for you to get on. I just want to make sure we
14 don't get any background noise. Thanks.

15 Kate Tobin, CNN?

16 [No response.]

17 MODERATOR: Kate, CNN?

18 [No response.]

19 MODERATOR: Okay.

20 QUESTIONER: Nothing for me, Allard. Thank you.

21 MODERATOR: There you go.

22 QUESTIONER: Nothing for me. Thank you.

1 MODERATOR: Okay. Thanks.

2 Rasha with Associated Press?

3 QUESTIONER: Can you hear me?

4 MODERATOR: Yes, ma'am.

5 QUESTIONER: Could you explain the reshuffling of
6 the orbiters for the missions, which orbiters will now fly
7 on which missions and if that will change anything on those
8 missions?

9 MR. HALE: Well, let's see. Let me try to take a
10 crack at that.

11 We have an evaluation out to switch one flight
12 from Atlantis to Discovery. That is what we are going to
13 evaluate or get the responses back, the evaluation coming
14 up this next week, and I don't have that in front of me,
15 and I don't trust my memory to quote it.

16 Oh, stand by. Okay. Oh, we will go through it.

17 STS-117, which is the next flight up, will be
18 Atlantis, Vehicle 104.

19 STS-118, which will be the next flight, will be
20 the inaugural flight of Endeavour after it comes out of its
21 depot-level maintenance.

22 The third flight, which currently is scheduled

1 for Atlantis, STS-120, we are considering moving that to
2 Discovery, Vehicle No. 103, and that would take Discovery's
3 payload from the next flight, which is the Columbus module,
4 and move it to Atlantis, which would be 104. Potentially,
5 that could come in December which would give us four
6 flights this calendar year, but that remains to be seen.

7 That would leave the subsequent flight of the
8 Japanese module on Atlantis, as previously planned,
9 STS-123.

10 Does that help?

11 QUESTIONER: Yes. Thank you.

12 MODERATOR: Let's see. Nell Boyce, NPR?

13 QUESTIONER: Good evening, everyone.

14 Could someone please go over with me the
15 situation with Sunita Williams just again, what the
16 original plan was, what the delay means, and what the
17 options are that are still being considered?

18 MR. GERSTENMAIER: Again, the original plan, she
19 was going to swap on STS-118, and the current plan is still
20 she is going to swap on STS-118. That flight was going to
21 fly in June. That flight now looks like it will fly
22 sometime in the August time frame. So that a slip from

1 June to August would be the length of her additional time
2 on orbit.

3 QUESTIONER: And just to follow up, but did I
4 hear you say -- that was my understanding of the situation,
5 but I thought I heard you say that there might be some
6 considerations that would decide to bring her back in June
7 instead?

8 MR. GERSTENMAIER: No. Only if it looked like
9 the June flight was now moving into July or moving later,
10 and we would look at protecting an option to bring her home
11 on the same -- on that flight that moves into the
12 July-August time frame on STS-117.

13 QUESTIONER: I see. Thank you very much.

14 MODERATOR: Mike Schneider, AP?

15 [No response.]

16 MODERATOR: Mike, are you on?

17 QUESTIONER: Hi. Sorry about that. I muted my
18 button and forgot to unmute it.

19 MODERATOR: Hey, it worked.

20 QUESTIONER: Thanks for my question.

21 I just wanted to ask a follow-up to Nell's
22 question. Well, first of all, when is the date you can

1 make that decision on when Suni would come back home, and
2 what would need to be done? I take it Clay Anderson would
3 have to be on STS-117 instead of STS-118, and I know there
4 were some concerns about the weight on that Shuttle. If
5 you could just talk about what would need to be done if
6 Suni came back with the 117 crew and when is the latest you
7 could make that decision.

8 MR. GERSTENMAIER: We are kind of just at the
9 beginning stages of looking at all that.

10 We know there is some unique cargo that needs to
11 go up with Clay when he goes up, the seat liner for the
12 Soyuz, et cetera.

13 We have a candidate weight for what that
14 equipment weighs. We will work with the Shuttle program.
15 We think there is margin enough to go ahead and fly that
16 additional margin and weight, but we will go ahead and
17 confirm that with the teams and see where we are overall.

18 But again, I would stress that this is just,
19 again, kind of prudent planning on our part to just go
20 ahead and look at multiple options, to be prepared, and
21 that is what we are doing, and we are looking at those
22 traits and the specifics of what would be involved with

1 that and when it would occur, but we are nowhere near that
2 at this point.

3 The plan looks good for a good launch in June,
4 followed by the launch in August, and if we stay with that
5 plan, we will just stay with the sequence we have got and
6 stay with the plans, but if something comes up from a
7 testing standpoint or we end up with a slower rollout or
8 whatever, we will be prepared for the next action we need
9 to take.

10 MODERATOR: Okay. Jay Barbree, NBC?

11 [No response.]

12 MODERATOR: Jay, are you on?

13 [No response.]

14 MODERATOR: Okay. Alan Boyle, MSNBC?

15 QUESTIONER: Hi. I wanted to ask how the
16 Atlantis crew is taking this, whether there would be some
17 additional training scheduled or how they view this. Of
18 course, they are probably disappointed not being able to go
19 up as early as they thought.

20 MR. HALE: Well, let's see. I talked to the crew
21 and the commander just a few days ago. They are taking it
22 in good spirits. They want to have a good, safe launch

1 vehicle. They understand that this act of nature was an
2 untoward event, and they are happy to spend a little bit
3 more time in training in preparation for their flight, and
4 of course, they are anxious to fly.

5 "Disappointed" may be too strong a word because
6 we all understand in this business that you do run into
7 problems that have to be solved before it is safe to go
8 fly. So they are holding up very well.

9 QUESTIONER: Thank you.

10 MODERATOR: Okay. Ward Nelly [ph], [inaudible]
11 TV.

12 [No response.]

13 MODERATOR: Ward Nelly?

14 QUESTIONER: I guess I missed the button.

15 MODERATOR: Okay. You are on.

16 QUESTIONER: Thanks. I just wanted to touch with
17 Gerst. I am not sure I understood.

18 Did I understand you to say, sir, that you have
19 flown this number of repairs or these types of repairs in
20 the past? I think I misunderstood.

21 MR. GERSTENMAIER: I think I would categorize it
22 that we have flown this type of repair, not this large a

1 number of repairs.

2 QUESTIONER: Thanks.

3 MR. GERSTENMAIER: And I think the two areas that
4 truly are unique -- and, John, you can help me -- we have
5 the two foam spray areas on the tank, the BX area up by the
6 nose. That will be a unique repair, and we are doing some
7 unique testing for that.

8 And then on the side of the tank, there is going
9 to be another 31-square-foot area that has been sanded
10 down. It will have BX foam sprayed on it. It is similar
11 to what we do on another area of the tank, but it is
12 probably a little larger an area of repair than we have
13 done in the past.

14 John?

15 QUESTIONER: I hope to see pictures of that
16 testing. Thank you so much.

17 MODERATOR: Todd Halvorson, Florida Today?

18 QUESTIONER: Thanks, Allard.

19 I guess this is for Gerst or Wayne, whoever wants
20 to field it, but I am just trying to get a sense in general
21 of your confidence level that you will be able to get the
22 repairs done and fly before the next beta angle cutout in

1 July.

2 And, Wayne, could you say again what that cutout
3 exactly is, from when to when?

4 Thanks.

5 MR. HALE: Okay. The launch period is from June
6 the 8th to July 17th. I believe the beta cutout starts on
7 July 18th and runs through August 4th, leaving the next
8 window opening on August the 5th. Although as these things
9 go, there is probably a day or so that we could do some
10 thermal analysis to open it up.

11 Based on the discussions that we have had today,
12 I would say the confidence is high that we will fly in that
13 June-July window.

14 MODERATOR: Okay. David Waters, News 18 Orlando.

15 QUESTIONER: No questions here, Allard. Thanks.

16 MODERATOR: Okay. Kelly Young, New Scientist?

17 QUESTIONER: Hi, there. My question is for Wayne
18 Hale.

19 What would have been required for you to make the
20 decision to change out the tank? Was there any kind of
21 threshold?

22 MR. HALE: That is a really good question, Kelly.

1 The real thing we are looking for is to see the
2 engineering progress being made on this new type of repair
3 that we had to validate, one that we have never done
4 before, and had the testing or analysis or work come in, in
5 an adverse way, then it would have been an easy decision to
6 move over to the other tank and go fly that tank.

7 Today, the results are positive. The technical
8 team, not just the team working on it, but the independent
9 review teams that are looking over their shoulder all
10 expressed a high degree of confidence that we can come to a
11 positive outcome in validating this repair technique. So
12 that is really the key element we were looking for.

13 Of course, we always think about the schedule,
14 but in this case, being about a wash between flying this
15 tank or flying the other tank, it didn't drive a decision.

16 QUESTIONER: Thank you.

17 MODERATOR: Okay. John Schwartz, New York Times?

18 QUESTIONER: Thanks. You folks have taken care
19 of my questions. Have a good evening.

20 MODERATOR: Okay. Thanks.

21 And speaking of that, did I miss anyone? Because
22 it's the last one I have on my list. Did I miss anyone?

1 QUESTIONER: I'm the last one.

2 QUESTIONER: Well, Allard, this is Bill Harwood.

3 I've got another question, if I can get one.

4 MODERATOR: Absolutely.

5 QUESTIONER: It is really for John. I just was
6 wondering where the other area of the spray was. I missed
7 that one somehow, and I just want to make sure I understand
8 it.

9 Thanks.

10 MR. HONEYCUTT: Bill, it's on the [inaudible]
11 just forward to the barrel. I think when we took you out
12 and showed you that day, it was the level below the pencil
13 sharpener where you got to stand. So it was in that area
14 where we had a high density of damage sites.

15 MODERATOR: Okay. Do we have any other follow-up
16 questions?

17 QUESTIONER: Allard, it is Peter King at CBS, one
18 more time.

19 MODERATOR: Sure.

20 QUESTIONER: And I guess this is for Gerst.

21 Three months slipped from March to June, and I am
22 just wondering how comfortable you are at this point with

1 the time crunch you have got for 2010 in terms of not
2 having to cancel anything on the back end of this and
3 retire the Shuttle on time.

4 MR. GERSTENMAIER: Again, I don't think -- you
5 know, if we look at this overall, by the time we get
6 towards the end of 2008 and 2009, kind of the movement of
7 all the Shuttle flights have kind of settled down, and we
8 are kind of back on the normal schedule. So things look
9 pretty good again, overall.

10 I would also say that if you look at it, even if
11 we don't end up with four flights, we end up with three, I
12 think it still also fits pretty comfortable, with a little
13 bit of margin in for 2010.

14 We are kind of looking at this from a big-picture
15 standpoint, and as Wayne talked about moving orbiters
16 around and other things, there are lots of little things we
17 could do to help with the overall manifest to give us more
18 robustness, and that is what we are looking at.

19 So we had some more ability to gain some schedule
20 that we see in the out-years by moving some orbiters around
21 and some flights around. So I am pretty comfortable with
22 where we are sitting already with the flights we have got

1 in front of us between now and 2010, and I don't see a lot
2 of pressure on that caused by this event, but we will just
3 continue to watch it, and we will continue to refine our
4 work and keep things in front of us, but it is not a big
5 concern to us at this point.

6 QUESTIONER: Allard, Mark Carreau. Could I ask
7 one?

8 MODERATOR: Sure, go ahead.

9 QUESTIONER: It is for John Honeycutt.

10 And I'm sorry for the accounting question, but I
11 wanted to follow Bill's question. Could you give us the
12 number of sites that are being repaired at the two spray
13 sites at the top of the tank and at the side?

14 MR. HONEYCUTT: Yeah. It's about 200 on the new
15 spray we picked up. We never actually counted the ones
16 from the pencil sharpener spray.

17 QUESTIONER: Thank you.

18 MR. HALE: You know, in the 1,000 to 1,600 range
19 up there, that was our estimate.

20 QUESTIONER: Thanks.

21 MODERATOR: Okay.

22 QUESTIONER: I had a question for Wayne. This is

1 Alan Boyle with MSNBC.

2 MODERATOR: Go ahead.

3 QUESTIONER: When did you know that the May
4 window was totally out of the question? Was that a couple
5 weeks ago, or what turned the tide there?

6 MR. HALE: Well, you know, we have been
7 evaluating it all along, and it all depends on the rate at
8 which the repairs go forward, and until we got into the
9 repairs and had a real handle on how quickly it was going
10 to go, it was nothing but a guess.

11 There were some indications probably a couple
12 weeks ago that given the rates, that as it turned out, we
13 were not going to make the end of the May window, but it
14 doesn't behoove us to make a decision until we get the
15 data. So, until you start seeing how the work is really
16 going, you are just on a guesswork, and we didn't want to
17 give up on that.

18 QUESTIONER: Thank you.

19 MODERATOR: Okay. I am fishing, but one last
20 chance. Any last follow-up questions?

21 [No response.]

22 MODERATOR: Okay. Not hearing any, thanks,

1 everyone. That concludes our teleconference. We will be
2 giving you updates in the near future. Thanks.

3 [End of News Teleconference of April 10, 2007.]

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